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ACTION EA-14

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VS, SL

SUBJECT: RELATIONS BETWEEN GVN AND SIERRA LEONE

AND DRV DIPLOMATIC CAMPAIGN IN AFRICA

REF (A) STATE 172481; (B) SAIGON 9836;  
(C) FREETOWN 1409; (D) SAIGON 9984;  
(E) STATE 171607

1. AS REQUESTED REF (A) I TODAY CALLED MINEXTAFF LUKE AND PURSUED THE QUESTION OF ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN GVN AND SIERRA LEONE. I REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF SENATOR SUNG'S EFFORTS AND THE CONTACTS GVN REPS HAD MADE IN LONDON AND MONROVIA WITH GOSL OFFICIALS. I THEN INQUIRED ABOUT THE PRESENT STATUS OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS. MINISTER LUKE SAID THERE WERE NO NEW DEVELOPMENT BUT THAT THE GOSL REMAINED WILLING TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH GVN. I THEN INQUIRED WHETHER HE HAD ANY PREFERENCE AS TO CHANNELS TO BE USED BY THE GVN TO CONCLUDE ARRANGEMENTS FOR A GVN DELEGATION TO VISIT SIERRA LEONE FOR THE FORMALITIES

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OF ESTABLISHING RELATIONS. THE MINISTER REPLIED THAT THE MOST CONVENIENT ARRANGEMENT FOR THE GOSL WOULD BE FOR MY EMBASSY TO SERVE AS INTERMEDIARY IN SUCH COMMUNICATIONS. I REPLIED THAT I WOULD CONSULT MY GOVERNMENT ON THIS SUGGESTION.

2. I GAINED THE IMPRESSION THAT GOSL REPRESENTATIVES IN MONROVIA AND LONDON HAD SOMEHOW MANAGED TO CONFUSE THE ISSUE PREVIOUSLY.

3. RELATIVE TO THE GOSL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PRG AND DRV, THE MINISTER UPON QUESTIONING SAID HE HAD MET PRG'S MADAME BINH "ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS" AND GOSL STOOD READY TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PRG. HE CONFIRMED AGAIN REFTEL (C), THAT SHE WAS SCHEDULED TO VISIT FREETOWN BUT CANCELLED OUT AT THE LAST MOMENT. I PARADED OUT ALL ARGUMENTS AGAINST RECOGNITION OF THE PRG BUT I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THEIR MIND IS MADE UP AND THAT ALL THE PRG HAS TO DO TO GAIN RECOGNITION IS TO SEND A DELEGATION TO FREETOWN. FROM MY PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF MINISTER LUKE, A NOTORIOUS WOMANIZER, I HAVE THE FEELING THAT MADAME BINH HAD LITTLE DIFFICULTY IN CHARMING LUKE INTO HIS VIEWS. HE DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THE FACT THAT PRG WAS "SEATED" AT THE ALGIERS CONFERENCE WAS THE GENESIS OF GOSL'S PRESENT POLICY.

4. I BELIEVE THAT THE GVN WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO MOVE FAST TO TRY TO AT LEAST ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH GOSL BEFORE THE PRG.

5. THE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ARE SOLICITED ON WHETHER THIS EMBASSY SHOULD PLAY THE ABOVE-MENTIONED INTERMEDIARY

ROLE BETWEEN THE GVN AND THE GOSL.  
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